

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1403

INFO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

UNCLAS JAKARTA 14463

HONG KONG FOR TREASURY REP

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO TREASURY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFIN, OGEN, ID

SUBJ: EXCHANGE OF U.S. CURRENCY DAMAGED IN PLANE CRASH

1. ON SEPTEMBER 24, 1975, GARUDA INDONESIAN AIRLINES F-28 PASSENGER AIRCRAFT EN ROUTE FROM JAKARTA TO PALEMBANG, SOUTH SUMATRA CRASHED AND BURNED NEAR DESTINATION. PLANE WAS CARRYING \$250,000 IN U.S. BANK NOTES SHIPPED BY JAKARTA HEADQUARTERS OF BANK OF INDONESIA (GOI CENTRAL BANK) TO ITS PALEMBANG BRANCH. DENOMINATIONS AS FOLLOWS: 5500 TWENTY DOLLAR NOTES; 12,000 TEN DOLLAR NOTES; AND 4000 FIVE DOLLAR NOTES.

2. WOODEN CRATE WITH METAL INNER-CASE IN WHICH NOTES WERE PACKED WAS RECOVERED FROM WRECKAGE IN DAMAGED CONDITION. SOME NOTES WERE BURNED; ALL SUFFERED HEAT DAMAGE; BUT MANY REMAINED IDENTIFIABLE. P.T. ASURANSI JAYA, GOI-OWNED INSURANCE COMPANY WHICH HAD INSURED SHIPMENT FOR BANK OF INDONESIA, HAS ASKED EMBASSY FOR ADVICE ON HOW TO RECOVER VALUE OF NOTES THAT ARE STILL IDENTIFIABLE. IT ALSO ASKED WHETHER BANK OF INDONESIA, AS OWNER, OR P.T. ASSURANSI JAYA AS INSUROR, IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PURSUING WHATEVER CLAIM IS AVAILABLE WITH U.S. TREASURY.

3. AFTER RECOVERING FROM CRASH WRECKAGE CRATE CONTAINING NOTES, AND UNCLASSIFIED

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METAL

LINER WAS OPENED AND INSPECTED BY BANK AND P.T. ASSURANSI JAYA OFFICIALS..

PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN AT THE TIME, WHICH WERE SHOWN TO EMBASSY OFFICER, SHOWS JUMBLED MASS OF RUMPLED, MISSHAPEN BILLS. SOME - BUT NOT ALL- REMAIN IN BANDED PACKETS. FACE MARKINGS AND FOUR CORNERS OF MANY NOTES STILL INTACT. MANY EVIDENTLY SUFFERED SEVERE SCORCHING AND HEAT DAMAGE AND SOME MAY HAVE BEEN BURNED BEYOND RECOGNITION. NO EFFORT WAS MADE BEFORE BILLS WERE RE-PACKED TO SORT OR IDENTIFY DAMAGED NOTES.

JUDGING FROM PHOTOGRAPHS, IDENTIFICATION OF THE UP TO 21,500 NOTES, WHICH ARE NOW IN VAULT AT BANK OF INDONESIA, MAY BE TIME-COMSUMING TASK REQUIRING SOME EXPERTISE. (XEROX COPIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS BEING POUCHED TO ADDRESSEES.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR ADVISING P.T. JASA INDONESIA OR AS APPROPRIATE BANK OF INDONESIA CONCERNING FOLLOWING:

A. WHAT RIGHTS, IF ANY, ARE AVAILABLE FOR RECOVERING VALUE OF DAMAGED NOTES UNDER U.S. LAWS AND REGULATIONS?

B. WHAT PROCEDURES SHOULD BE FOLLOWED FOR CERTIFYING IDENTITY OF NOTES AND DELIVERING THEM TO U.S. TREASURY? I) FOR EXAMPLE, SHOULD NOTES BE SHIPPED IN CURRENT CONDITION TO WASHINGTON FOR SORTING AND INSPECTION BY U.S. TREASURY EXPERTS IN PRESENCE OF INDONESIAN EMBASSY OFFICIALS? II) COULD U.S. TREASURY EXPERT VISIT JAKARTA TO INSPECT NOTES? III) IF SO, SHOULD NOT EXPENSE BE BORNE BY INDONESIANS?

5. SUBJECT TO DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS, EMBASSY ASSUMES QUESTION OF WHETHER BANK OF INDONESIA OR INSUROR, P.T. JASA INDONESIA, SHOULD PURSUE CLAIM WITH USG MUST BE RESOLVED BY BANK AND JASA INDONESIA IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSURANCE CONTRACT, AND THAT USG WOULD EXPECT WRITTEN UNDERTAKING SIGNED BY BOTH THE PARTIES DESIGNATING WHICH OF THEM WOULD PURSUE CLAIM AND RELEASING ANY RIGHT OF CLAIM BY THE OTHER.

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